

Abstract

This invention relates to a method and apparatus for a solar collector having intergral control of the the maximum temperature that it can reach, thereby avoiding excessive stagnation temperatures in the collector. In one embodiment, a solar collector comprises a top portion comprising glazing, a bottom portion; an absorber disposed between said top portion and said bottom portion for absorbing solar energy received through said glazing, said absorber in a spaced relationship above said bottom portion such that a channel is defined between a lower surface of said absorber and an upper surface of said bottom portion; an inlet and an outlet associated with and at substantially opposite ends of said channel between said absorber and said bottom portion, for ventilating said channel; and a damper for opening said outlet at a temperature equal to or above a first selected temperature and for closing said outlet at a temperature equal to or below a second selected temperature; wherein said first and second selected temperatures are below a stagnation temperature of the solar collector.